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**FIVE HUNDRED BOOKS  
FOR THE YOUNG**

**A GRADED AND ANNOTATED LIST**

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**GEORGE E. HARDY**

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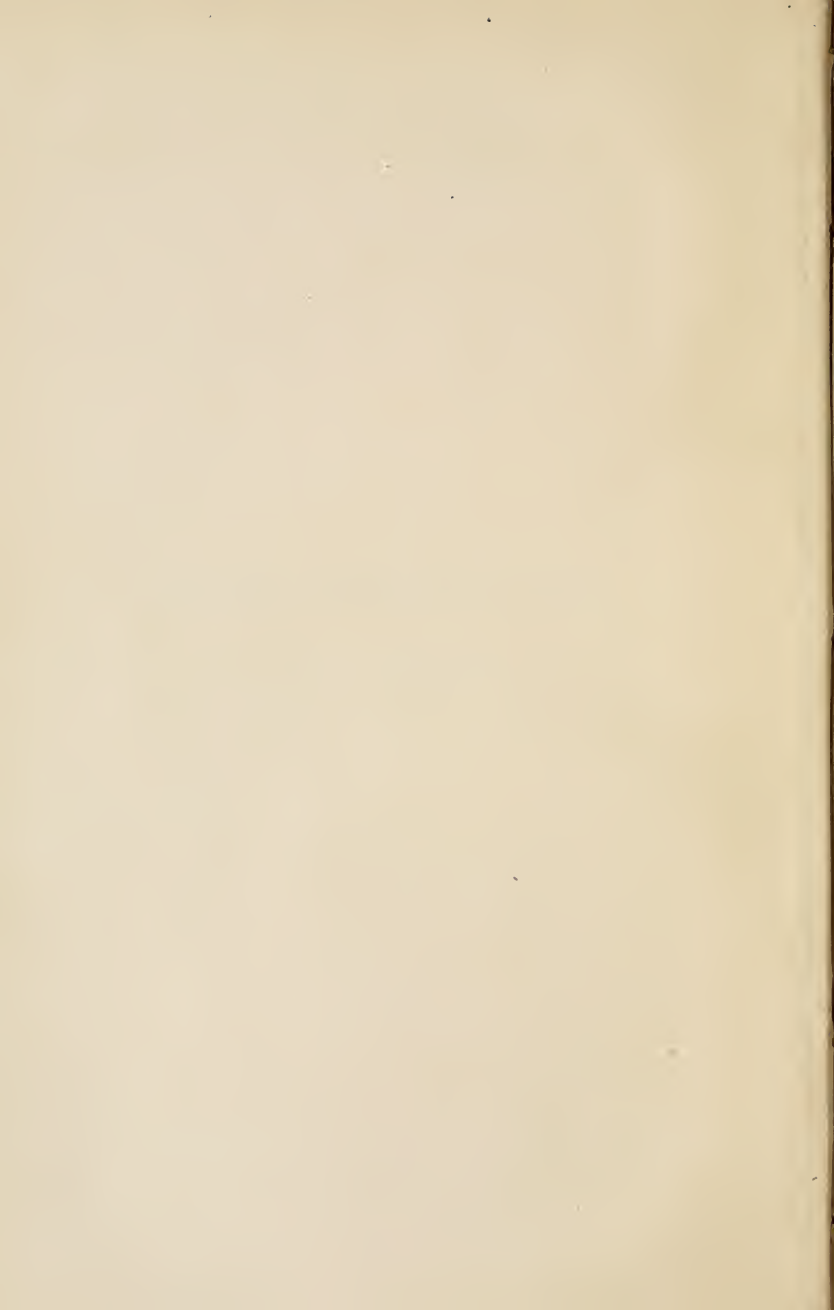
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FIVE HUNDRED BOOKS

FOR THE YOUNG



# FIVE HUNDRED BOOKS

FOR THE YOUNG

*A GRADED AND ANNOTATED LIST*

PREPARED BY

GEORGE E. HARDY

PRINCIPAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 82, NEW YORK CITY, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE OF THE NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

"Sublimest danger over which none weeps,  
When any young wayfaring soul goes forth  
Alone, unconscious of the perilous road,  
The day sun dazzling in his limpid eyes,  
To thrust his way, he an alien, through  
The world of books!"

—MRS. BROWNING.



*SECOND EDITION*

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1892

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PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY  
NEW YORK



## NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

*Forty-seventh Annual Meeting.*

SARATOGA SPRINGS, JULY, 1892.

### THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

Your Special Committee appointed to review the report of the "Committee on Literature" would respectfully submit the following to the Association :

FIRST : That after a careful examination of the advance sheets of the volume entitled "Five Hundred Books for the Young," prepared by Mr. George E. Hardy, of New York City, Chairman of the Committee on Literature, we find it an aid of the greatest value to parents and teachers in determining and directing the course of reading for children on account of the discriminating judgment of the author and the high character of the books selected.

SECOND : That in our opinion it is the most complete work of its kind that has yet been published, and commends itself as a most important contribution to the efforts that are being made for the improvement of the character of reading for children.

THIRD : That we most heartily recommend to the Association that it shall give its full endorsement to this volume, and thus recognize in a proper manner the great value of the work and the efficient services of its author.

JOHN M. MILNE,  
JOHN KENNEDY,  
AUGUSTUS S. DOWNING.

The above report was unanimously adopted by New York State Teachers' Association.

WELLAND HENDRICK, *Secretary.*

July 9, 1892.

## NEW JERSEY STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

*Annual Meeting, July, 1892.*

ASBURY PARK, N. J.

THE Committee on Resolutions reported :

The Committee to whom advance sheets of Mr. Hardy's volume, entitled "Five Hundred Books for the Young," have been submitted, cordially recommend the same for the endorsement of the Association, as being a valuable aid to both teachers and parents in the selection of proper reading matter for children of all ages.

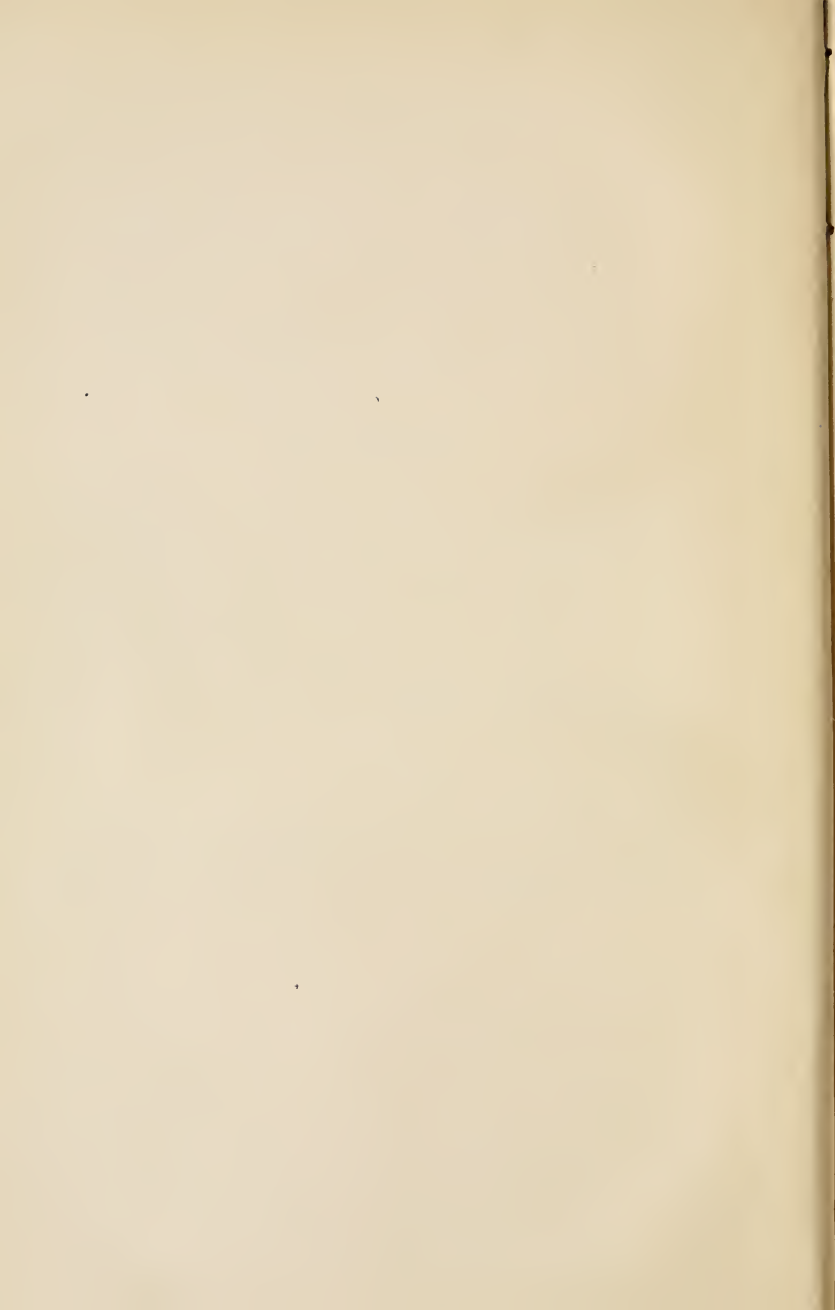
JOHN TERHUNE,	}	<i>Committee.</i>
GEO. G. RYAN,		
EDWARD KELLY,		
S. V. ARROWSMITH,		
J. W. KENEDY,		

The above report was unanimously adopted by the New Jersey State Teachers' Association, July 2, 1892.

J. H. HULSART, *Secretary.*

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## INTRODUCTION

ONE afternoon, some ten years ago, I was sitting in the class-room planning the work of the morrow, when my glance fell upon a "Half-Dime Library" lying on the desk, which had been taken from one of the pupils during the course of the day. It was not the first of such publications, probably by many hundreds, that had thus found their way into my hands to be afterward destroyed. Among my boys it was generally understood that all such literature when found in use during school-hours was contraband, and as such was subject to confiscation and destruction. Beyond this, little or nothing was done in school to prevent the reading of these books by the pupils, or to cultivate and direct their taste in reading. Indeed, if the truth were but known, it would have appeared that their teacher, in company with a goodly number of his guild, had much of secret sympathy with the ecstasies of admiration into which the youthful reader was so frequently thrown at the contemplation of the dazzling exploits of Mr. Deadwood Dick and other marauding gentry of the same adventurous turn of mind; for had not we of an earlier generation been devotees at similar shrines?

Certainly in my own case it was a fact beyond peradventure that I had once been on terms the most intimate with crowds of the masterly creations of Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., of that erudite "Professor of History in the University of Louisiana," William Henry Peck, and of Dr.

J. H. Robinson, the peerless author of "Nick Whiffles, the Trapper Guide of the Northwest," a most fascinating serial romance, whose enduring popularity was testified to by the fact that in my day alone it was republished no less than three times in the columns of the *New York Weekly*. Regularly every week in those Arcadian days I used to read the *New York Ledger*, the *New York Weekly*, the *Boys' and Girls' Weekly*, and less frequently, but just as often as I possibly could, the *Chimney Corner* and the old *Waverley Magazine*. Many were the delightful opportunities thus afforded me to bivouac on the boundless plains of the Far West in company with dashing Ned Buntline ; tears a plenty I was always shedding over the woes of Lena Rivers and all the other depressing offsprings of Mrs. Mary J. Holmes' genius ; and for more than six months at a stretch I had followed, in weekly instalments, the bewildering intricacies of "Out of the Depths," a powerful serial written by a most prolific yet blameless gentlewoman, she of the many initials, Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth.

Jack Harkaway, in school and out, was my idol, and I followed the astonishing career, from start to finish, of that ingenious young gentleman with feelings of undisguised admiration and envy. Serial literature did not, however, engross my entire leisure hours. Books that Dr. Johnson said could be held readily in the hand, possessed the same charm for me that they did for the doctor, and it was with pardonable pride that I could point to a muster-roll of several hundreds of Messrs. Munro's and Beadle's gray and terra-cotta covered publications, the *chef d'œuvres* of which I had read and re-read many times.

Often, when stretched on my trundle-bed after having drunk deep at these Pierian springs, did I ponder in the stillly night on the practicability of an immediate entrance

upon the prosperous career which had given deathless fame to Claude Duval and Three-Fingered Jack ; and many were the solemn conclaves held by two other kindred spirits and myself over the feasibility of seizing a certain brick schooner, hailing from Haverstraw, but just then being peacefully unloaded at a North River pier. Having overpowered the crew we were to hoist the black flag, and sail away with, as well as I can remember, "a wet sheet and a flowing bowl" to the Spanish Main. We called ourselves at that time the "Mystic League," and had a most distressingly intricate series of passwords, grips, and all the other regulation paraphernalia of an oath-bound secret society, the degrees of which we "worked" just as seriously as certain grown-up men are doing to-day.

Why we finally abandoned these deeds of high emprise, and accepted without a murmur the dreary monotony of our *fin-de-siècle* realism, is not quite clear to me at this late day, although I have vague recollections of a serious rupture and subsequent strained relations, among the members of the "Mystic League," over the permanent location of our pirates' lair, and, incidentally, over the disposition of the captive crew. Two of us were unreservedly of the opinion that every mother's son of the yet-to-be-captured crew—some five in number—should walk the plank, in the most approved manner, and then boldly flying the "Jolly Roger," we should set out at once on a long cruise to the low latitudes in search of Spanish galleons, pausing on the way only long enough to pillage a few towns with Spanish names that we had discovered in an atlas of the West Indies. The other member of the "Mystic League," with a wisdom far beyond the years of a bloodthirsty boy of twelve, was strongly of the opinion that, having overpowered the crew, we should force them, at the revolver's mouth, to work the vessel ;

and in view of the uncertainty of Spanish galleons frequenting the Gulf of Mexico to the extent they did in the days of Sir Francis Drake and other licensed ruffians of the sixteenth century, he thought we had better establish our lair in the vicinity of Fort Lee, so as to be within easy-reaching distance of our homes should stress of fortune ever constrain us to resort to such a refuge.

But while the rare pleasure of poking a flint-lock pistol into the faces of belated travellers on Hounslow Heath, or of notching on our rifles the number of redskins whom we were to send red-handed to the happy hunting-grounds could no longer be ours, yet it must be confessed that happiness was still to be found in the stories of a brilliant galaxy of *raconteurs*, who kept on weekly tap much that made our prosaic lives endurable.

Roger Starbuck, Captain Ingraham, Oll Coomes, Bracebridge Hemyns, May Agnes Fleming, were but a few of the literary luminaries in whose genial warmth we could "loaf and invite our souls." "Ah! there were giants in those days," I sighed, as in my revery I watched the Homeric shades of these departed worthies stalk silently past me out into the vast beyond. Once these were thy gods, O Israel! But nowadays—*cheu, fugaces*—the fickle world knows them not, and their works have long since passed into the limbo of forgotten books.

Such were my thoughts on that afternoon of long ago as my eyes fell upon the soiled and tattered "library" lying on my desk; and I recalled with something akin to pain the eager face, and mute reproachful eyes of the little victim whom I had so ruthlessly despoiled of his literary treasure. So full of sympathy was I with the memories of my boyish past, that on this particular afternoon I did what I had not dreamed of doing in half



a score of years before—I picked up the tattered volume and addressed myself seriously to the task of reading it.

It took me over an hour to read the book, and the long shadows of a late September afternoon were falling athwart the empty benches when I had finished the last words of the miserably printed pages. My whole temper and frame of mind had undergone a change in this time, and I now seemed to see shadows, longer and darker than those cast by the setting sun, falling across the little ones who on the morrow would fill those empty benches. For the first time I began to realize what a wretched change had been wrought since I was a boy in the character of the reading matter offered to children. Then it was none too good, beyond a doubt; but although extravagantly absurd and ludicrously improbable, I do not recall that it was ever meanly, pitifully vicious. In the story printed and purveyed especially for young boys which I had just finished, I had read of nothing but vulgar descriptions of the sordid lives and experiences of New York's "submerged tenth." The scene of the story was laid in and about the Bowery, and its characters lived, moved, and had their being in the dens of vice that line the streets leading to that brazen thoroughfare. The hero was a profane, shoulder-hitting tough with scarcely one redeeming quality, while the heroine was simply a prostitute, given at times to spasms of hysterical virtue. The other characters were selected from the motley crowds that throng the Bowery on any Saturday night, and through all the scenes there stalked a vulgar caricature of an impossible detective. Further examination of other "libraries" convinced me that such characters and incidents were no novelties in half-dime literature. I could refer my readers to a score of such pernicious volumes if I cared to give them and their villainous authors and publishers a gratuitous advertisement.

Not long afterward I entered my class-room during the noonday recess, and found one of my brightest boys, a precocious lad of twelve, so absorbed in the reading of a book as to be perfectly oblivious of my presence. Upon inquiry the interesting volume proved to be Eugene Sue's "Mysteries of Paris," which my pupil had procured from a well-known circulating library of the city, whence he had already obtained and read a most entertaining series of books, which included such ethical masterpieces as the younger Dumas' "Camille" and the "Mysteries of the Court of George IV.," by G. W. M. Reynolds, a sensational and erotic writer happily no longer in vogue. This is hardly the place to elaborate on the many evils resulting from the reading of vicious literature. Instances of the mental and moral degradation resulting from the reading of this literary garbage are unhappily only too frequent in every teacher's experience. To measure the silent influence of such pernicious reading is an impossibility ; for when youthful innocence has once been defiled by such vile productions, who can measure the gradual disintegration of character that follows the reading of foul literature, as certainly as the night follows the day. Well may the Laureate sing :

"Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage of your  
sewer ;

Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should issue  
pure !

"Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the rising race of  
men ;

Have we risen from the beast, then back into the beast again ! "

The following lay sermon which Mr. Justice Depue delivered recently to the Essex County Grand Jury, convened in the Court of Oyer and Terminer at Newark, is valuable as the deliberate expression by a judicial ob-

server of the proceedings in our criminal courts, and as such is worthy of the careful attention of all thoughtful men and women, whether parents or teachers :

“Gentlemen,” said the learned Judge, “I desire to make a few observations in regard to a case that was tried here during the last term, a case in which a boy of the age of sixteen was convicted of murder in the first degree for killing a man whom he had attempted to rob.

“The case has attracted a great deal of public attention from the character of the literature in which that boy was educated—half-dime libraries. I never saw a copy of one until I saw it during the trial of the case, when several were produced. It is apparent that it is the most pernicious literature that can possibly get into the hands of children. Men would avoid it.

“I am not aware of any law that would warrant the indictment of any of the books that I have seen ; but at the next term, if I can find any of those books that come within the scope of the law, I shall ask the Grand Jury to indict.

“I find from information that upward of twenty persons in this city are engaged in the sale of this sort of literature, and that it is sold to boys and girls—school-boys and school-girls. And I have also obtained an estimate from a very authoritative source of the relative ages of persons who are brought before our police courts for offences involving stealing, attempts to rob, and crimes of that character, and I will take the opportunity of mentioning the figures now :

“Persons charged with larceny combined with breaking and entering, or entering with intent—that is a high crime—under the age of 18 years, thirty per cent. ; between 18 and 23, sixty per cent., making ninety per cent. ; over 23, ten per cent. For simple larceny which

involves the same grade of crime—being petty or grand larceny according to the amount—under 18, sixty per cent. ; between 18 and 23, thirty per cent. ; over 23, ten per cent.—cases of simple larceny being considerably the most numerous.

“It is safe to say that of the persons charged with some form of stealing, over 60 per cent. are under the age of 18 years!

“Now, it is possible that there may be some method of controlling the sale of this literature, especially to children, by the powers that I understand are vested in the Board of Education. At all events, I desire to call public attention to the subject, in order that public interest may be aroused to protect young people from this class of literature. If any case had been brought before me and I had opportunity to look it up, I should have asked you to stay longer, inasmuch as I consider this a matter of so much public importance. But a great deal may be done from the publicity which may be given to the facts I have mentioned, especially in bringing the matter to the attention of all who are interested in children ; and you all know they are to be the men of the next generation.

“I hope that the remarks I have made will not fail to be a subject-matter of attention by the next Grand Jury.”

As one result of my excursion into modern literature for children, I set to work at once to build up a class library and through it to make an effort to direct the pupils' reading. Realizing from the outset that the secret of the success of all such wretched stories as the “library” I had just read was due as much to the rapidity of their action and the frequency and exciting character of their dialogue as to anything else, I deemed it best at the outset to substitute the works of Oliver Optic, Harry Castle-

mon, and Horatio Alger, Jr., with their wholesome tone and quick succession of incidents, for the lucubrations of "Peter Pad," "Old Sleuth," "Cap Collier," and the other distinguished members of the "half-dime" fraternity. It was not long before the other teachers of the school fell in line with this idea; *St. Nicholas* and *Harper's Young Folks* were also procured, and in an encouragingly short time a better, and just as interesting a literature, was eagerly sought and enjoyed by hundreds of our pupils.

In the course of a few years my little class library of not quite a hundred books became the nucleus of the library of my present school, numbering now over five hundred volumes. By having boys of various ages throughout the school write criticisms of new books along certain lines—a suggestion which I borrowed from the "Columbian Reading Union" of New York—by closely watching the volumes called for, by noting the predilection of certain grades for certain books, and by dint of persistent questioning of the boys themselves, I gradually got to know something of the tastes and preferences of boys, and to realize fully the inestimable value of a well-selected and judiciously handled school library, not only as an important factor in class-work, but also, what is of far greater importance to the community and the State, as a most effective aid to the building of character.

In 1889 an opportunity was offered me of putting the knowledge thus obtained to some practical use outside of my own school. In July of that year I was invited to read a paper on "The School Library" before the New York State Teachers' Association convened in Brooklyn. One result of the reading of this paper was the immediate formation in the Association of a "Committee on Reading," which was to report on the condition of reading in the public schools, and to offer such suggestions



as would tend to its improvement. As chairman of this Committee I made my report to the Association at its meeting in Saratoga in the following year, and two thousand copies, under the title of "What Shall our Children Read?" were distributed by the Executive Committee throughout the State. Before the Convention adjourned the following resolution had been adopted :

*"Resolved, That a Committee on Literature be appointed by the President for a term of three years. The duties of this Committee shall be to prepare suitable graded lists of proper reading matter for children, to review current juvenile works, to prepare and circulate leaflets on reading for the young, and to aid in every way this Association in its efforts to cultivate in our young people the taste for the reading of good literature."*

I was again honored by the Association in being made chairman of the "Committee on Literature," and at once set to work upon the task of preparing the graded lists mentioned in the resolutions. The scheme was an ambitious one, and the attempt to realize it soon disclosed the fact that much more time and labor were involved in the preparation of the list than would appear at first sight, as all who have ever attempted the preparation of similar lists can testify to their sorrow.

On January 1st, I mailed five hundred copies of the following circular to all the leading librarians, publishers, and school superintendents throughout the country, and notices of it appeared in most of the principal educational journals :

"The New York State Teachers' Association, in its efforts to offer some effective resistance to the rapidly increasing supply of worthless publications purveyed es-



pecially for children, has organized a 'Committee on Literature,' which will hereafter take its place as one of the standing committees of the Association. The committee will devote itself to the cultivation in our young people of the taste for good literature ; its present 'plan of campaign' is to increase and multiply in every way the child's opportunities for reading the best books. In the development of this plan the committee has in view : 1st, The preparation of leaflets on reading for the young. 2d, The formation and proper use of school libraries. 3d, The reviewing and classifying of recent juvenile works. 4th, The preparation of lists of suitable books—books of fiction, history, travel, biography, and popular science—so classified that the busy teacher will be enabled to select at a glance choice reading matter for each of his school grades.

"To complete the programme thus outlined is a work too ambitious for the committee to attempt at present. As an initial step the committee proposes to issue, in time for the next Convention, a little book, in which an effort will be made to classify some of the works of literature according to the standards of grading now in current use in the schools, and thus furnish to teachers a list of literary masterpieces which can either serve as reading matter for their classes or be used as alternates with the regular reading-books of the grade.

"Such a list of books has already been prepared, and it is now deemed advisable to subject this list to an extended comparison with other lists for the purpose of perfecting it, and also of including in it as many additional books as may be practicable. The method of grading adopted in this list is that followed in the ordinary series of School Readers, and books will be classified as alternates for the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Readers.

"The great practical importance of such a graded list must be recognized by every parent, teacher, and librarian who has given the matter any serious attention. It is in consideration of this fact that you are earnestly requested to co-operate with the committee by sending to its chairman, at your earliest convenience, any list of books, graded or otherwise, which you have found serviceable in this work, together with such hints or comments as your experience may suggest.

"Correspondence is cordially invited, and all contributions will be promptly acknowledged."

Something less than ninety answers were received, a disappointing result when the importance of the work and the number of circulars sent out are borne in mind. About twenty lists came to hand, some few of which were excellent, while most of the others were almost valueless for the end in view. Fortunately, the plan of the list had been completely outlined, and the largest part of the work accomplished before the circulars were sent out ; otherwise the long and tedious task of compiling this list could not have been finished in time for the Convention.

Meagre and disappointing as were the returns, it is but fair to state that much valuable assistance was received from some of my correspondents and their lists, and I take this opportunity of thanking them all again for their courtesy and trouble.

The general plan attempted in this list is an experimental one, no previous list, to my knowledge, having been prepared on exactly the same lines. The grouping of subjects under the seven general headings of "Arts and Sciences," "Fairy Tales and Mythology," "Fiction," "General Literature, including Poetry," "Geography, Travel, and Adventure," "History and Biography," and



"Miscellany," while not entirely new is yet an attempt to simplify and group related subjects. For instance, biographies and historical works are grouped together, and under the heading of "Fiction" are included all those stories which in many lists go masquerading under the title of "Historical Fiction." Under the several subdivisions of each general heading the titles of the books are arranged alphabetically, thus insuring a ready reference to them, excepting in the case of "History and Biography," where a chronological arrangement has been attempted.

The most important feature of the list is the effort that has been made to apportion all the books classified to a definite grade of class-work, based on the one standard of grading uniformly recognized throughout the United States. The plan attempted in some lists of grading books according to the ages of the supposed readers seems to me to be a defective one, inasmuch as it is the most common of all class-room experiences to discover that there are precocious lads of ten, and doltish dullards of sixteen, with a most exasperatingly uneven variety of intellectual ups and downs between these age limits. The method of grading followed in this list is far from being a hard-and-fast one. An examination of the seven and a half years' course of study provided for the New York schools will show how elastic such a scheme of grading really is. For instance, in this course of study we find the Third Reader prescribed for the second term of the third year of school, and also for the first and second terms of the fourth year of school; the Fourth Reader is prescribed for both terms of the fifth year and for the first term of the sixth year, and so on, different reading-books being required, however, for each term.

The task of assigning the books to their respective

grades has been a very trying one. The great majority of the volumes graded I have personally examined and listed ; a few I have taken on the recommendation of those in whose judgment I have had confidence, while the others have been examined under my direction by methods referred to elsewhere.

The work of selection has been made in a most catholic spirit ; it may be that some of my more austere critics in glancing over the books listed will pronounce it too catholic. Such a criticism in these days of varied tastes is preferable to the statement that the range of books listed has been confined within too narrow limits. My own personal preference would incline me to a much smaller list ; but the views of many of my correspondents have led me to extend the list to its present number.

When my list was almost completed, I discovered by correspondence with some of the publishers that certain books I had listed were no longer obtainable, that is, they were out of print, and could not be easily obtained from the publishers, or in the retail stores. The accessibility of the books in such a list as I was making, struck me as a very practical consideration, and when I had completed the list I submitted it to Mr. J. N. Wing, of Charles Scribner's Sons, who very kindly went over the entire MS. and indicated for me all the books that could no longer be readily obtained through the regular channels of trade. This will explain in part why certain books are not here listed which many, no doubt, will expect to find, and also why some of the old favorites of twenty-five years ago find no place in this list of to-day. And yet with all these precautions, it is not to be expected that the list will prove either a perfect or a complete one. Five hundred books are a large number to handle personally, much less to examine critically, and it

would not be surprising to find that some errors had managed to creep in.

The compiler of this list has been mindful that his first duty is to the purchaser, and therefore he has invariably given the preference, wherever he has known it to be possible, to the cheapest and the best edition of the volume listed. As the list is largely intended for secular schools, no book avowedly sectarian in the narrow sense has been admitted, although the compiler knows that some of the very best books for children—and he has two of these particular books in mind—are to be found among denominational publications.

Most of the lists that I have seen are “top heavy,” or abnormally developed on certain sides; in a list lying before me the lower grades have not more than a dozen books of all kinds assigned them, while the High-School grades are made up of about all the general publications of certain enterprising publishers. In the following list care has been taken to assign about the same number of volumes to each of the general divisions, excepting the department of “Fiction,” where the manifest impossibility of such a course needs no explanation. Sympathizing with the needs of the younger children I have always, wherever possible, assigned to the lower or intermediate grades the larger number of books. As the Sixth Reader is not generally used throughout the schools, the comparatively few books listed under this heading can be used either in grades using the Sixth Reader or in the advanced Fifth-Reader grades.

The value of such a list as the present one can be determined only by practical experience. Certainly, among teachers who have neither the time nor the opportunities to read and grade our juvenile literature, there is a constantly increasing demand for guide-lists,

as many of our State Superintendents of Instruction can testify. Nor is the need less great among parents. America is a nation of readers ; but an examination of the book-stores, the circulating libraries, and the news-stands—which latter are in too many instances no longer either safe or respectable places for children to visit or purchase papers—will show that when the majority of our grown-up people read anything beyond the periodicals and the newspapers nine-tenths of what they read is simply trash. Worthless literature is the curse of the child's intellect and the bane of the child's morals, yet it has the market ; and its widespread distribution and rapid sale are striking testimony alike to the deterioration of the popular taste and to our defective scheme of elementary education, which concerns itself with teaching the child how to read and gives no thought to what he reads. It was the contemplation of the vast amount of desultory, undirected, and unrestrained reading of what Mr. Frederick Harrison has called "the poisonous exhalations of mere literary garbage and bad men's worst thoughts" that drove him to exclaim that he "could almost reckon the printing-press as among the scourges of mankind."

In these days of rapid multiplication of books it is idle on our part, if not indeed ridiculous, to be forever saying to children : "Don't read this !" "Don't read that !" This constantly increasing chorus of "Don'ts" exasperates a child, and to my way of thinking has often the effect of driving him to the very danger we would have him avoid. It is much more pleasing to him, and as an expedient much more successful, to say, "Read this," instead of the rasping "Don't read that." Children who can read, must read ; and they are after all so very dependent and imitative that they will read nine-tenths of the books we recommend to them ; and

since it is not altogether in our power to destroy the glittering temptations which allure them to the reading of trash we should increase and multiply our counsels for reading the best books. To start a child right in the matter of reading, to advise and mark out a course for him, to furnish him with carefully selected lists of books of the right kind, is to give him an education and to put him in the possession of a moral and intellectual ideal. Such a list does the present one hope to be.

The importance of a child's early reading can scarcely be overestimated. In that curious and very amusing series of papers on "How I was Educated," that ran through the *Forum Magazine* some years ago, I find Mr. Andrew D. White making this statement: "Much reflection on my experience has convinced me that some kindly direction, in the reading of a fairly scholarly boy, is of the utmost importance, and never more so than now, when there are so many books pressing for attention." The character and tone of all the books listed in the following pages are bright and healthy; and on the score of cleanliness and purity the severest critic will find in none of them anything to condemn. The question, however, arises, whether, when we have provided wholesome and stimulating reading for children, we have accomplished all the good that was possible to have been done? Do all the clean and wholesome books for children that are literally flooding the market tend to the healthy development and training of the child's imagination, and to the right cultivation of his mental growth? There are many censors who complain that the good accomplished by this harmless reading matter is but a negative one at best, and that with it there has come a destruction of the virile taste that once characterized the reading of children. This, however, is too large a question to enter into here, and I must content myself with

presenting two of Mr. Ruskin's rules, which can be safely used as a standard by which teachers and parents can test any book they may wish to give to children : "The best romance," says Mr. Ruskin, "becomes dangerous if by its excitement it renders the ordinary course of life uninteresting, and increases the morbid thirst for scenes in which we shall never be called to act." And again he writes : "Whether novels or poetry or history be read, they should be chosen not for their freedom from evil, but for their possession of good."

GEORGE E. HARDY.

Grammar School No. 82,  
Seventieth Street and First Avenue,  
New York City.

## LIST OF BOOKS



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The autobiography of a horse, a book about which everybody is, or has been, talking; a strong plea for humane treatment of animals.

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BOYS AND GIRLS IN BIOLOGY.—S. H. Stevenson. Pp. 186. D. Appleton & Co. 1.50.

Simple studies of the lower forms of life based on the latest lectures of Professor Huxley.

COAL AND THE COAL MINES.—Homer Greene. Illustrated. Pp. 246. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. .75.

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CHEMICAL HISTORY OF A CANDLE.—Michael Faraday. Illustrated. Pp. 224. Harper & Brothers. .85.

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FRIENDS WORTH KNOWING.—Ernest Ingersoll. Illustrated. Pp. 258. Harper & Brothers. 1.00.

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WHAT MR. DARWIN SAW.—Charles Darwin. Illustrated. Pp. 236. Harper & Brothers. 3.00.

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FIRST BOOK IN GEOLOGY.—N. S. Shaler. Illustrated. Pp.  
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REYNARD THE FOX.—Hinreck Van Alckmer (Pseudonym).	Pp. 95.	.50.
EVENINGS AT HOME.—Dr. Aikin and Mrs. Barbauld.	Pp. 96.	.50.
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CROSS PATCH.—Susan C. Woolsey (Susan Coolidge). Illustrated. Pp. 268. Roberts Brothers. 1.25.

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CARROTS.—Mrs. L. M. Molesworth (Ennis Graham). Illustrated. Pp. 241. Macmillan & Co. 1.00.

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CHRISTMAS-TREE LAND.—Mrs. L. M. Molesworth (Ennis Graham). Illustrated. Pp. 223. Macmillan & Co. 1.00.

A holiday story of the visit of some children to a land where all the trees were firs and pines.

DADDY'S BOY.—Mrs. Lucy T. Smith (L. T. Meade). Illustrated. Pp. 334. Longmans, Green & Co. 1.50.

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EVENINGS AT HOME.—John Aikin and Mrs. Barbauld. Illustrated. Pp. 446. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1.00.

"Hang them," says Charles Lamb, writing to Coleridge in 1802, "I mean the cursed Barbauld crew, those blights and blasts of all that is human in man and child." In spite of Lamb's hysterics "Evenings at Home" has a strong following even to this day.

EDITH'S BURGLAR.—Mrs. F. H. Burnett. Illustrated. Pp. 64. Jordan, Marsh & Co. .75.

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LITTLE SAINT ELIZABETH.—Mrs. F. H. Burnett. Illustrated. Pp. 146. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1.50.

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TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.—Mary S. Claude. Pp. 104. Ginn  
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THE BIRDS' CHRISTMAS CAROL.—Kate Douglas Wiggin.  
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Boards. .50.

A little invalid girl celebrates her Christmas holidays in doing deeds of tenderness and love, not only to her near friends, but to all the poor and suffering children she can reach.

US.—Mrs. L. M. Molesworth (Ennis Graham). Illustrated.  
Pp. 240. Macmillan & Co. 1.00.

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The continuation of "Little Women;" the story of a sensible country girl who visits the city, and afterward earns her living by giving music lessons.



AFLOAT IN THE FOREST.—Captain Mayne Reid. Pp. 292.  
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The story of a boy who, in trying to earn money by selling berries, developed such a love of nature that he started an Agassiz museum. This is the first volume of a series which includes seven more books.

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CHRISTMAS STORIES.—Charles Dickens. Pp. 441. T. Y.  
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There are those still among us grown children who have reason to thank God that Charles Dickens once lived and wrote for us. To children his "Christmas Carols" are always fitting accompaniments to that festal time of "peace on earth and good-will to men."

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**CROWDED OUT o' CROFIELD.**—William O. Stoddard. Illustrated. Pp. 261. D. Appleton & Co. 1.50.

The story of how a plucky country boy carved his way to success by turning to account nearly everything he had learned.

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HETTY GRAY.—Rosa Mulholland. Illustrated. Pp. 219. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1.00.

An excellent story for girls of "Nobody's Bairn."

IVANHOE.—Sir Walter Scott. Pp. 536. Ginn & Co. (Classics for Children.) Boards. Net, .60. Postage, .14.

Try this book in your middle Fourth-Reader Grade, and see how wonderfully interested your boys will become in this delightful romance. One word of caution: cut out much of Sir Walter's historical padding and get quickly to the narrative.

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